

LETTER

Charles I (1600–1649), King of England, Scotland, and Ireland (1625–1649)

to Henrietta Maria (1609–1669), Queen of England, Scotland, and Ireland (1625–1649)

Newcastle, 1 July 1646

I had the contentment to receive your of 28 June upon Saturday last. The same day I got a true copy of the London propositions, which ('tis said) will be here within ten days, and now do assure you that they are such as I cannot grant without loss of my conscience, Crown, and honour; to which, as I can no way consent, so, in my opinion, a flat denial is to be delayed as long as may be, and how to make an handsome denying answer is all the difficulty, for which I shall take the advice of Montereul¹ and the French ambassador, delaying my answer (if it be possible) until one or both of them come. But if I cannot, I intend to make my delay upon my going to London (upon condition I may be there free and in safety), there to be better informed with the reasons of their propositions, and to make mine own.

Concerning Prince Charles, I have fully declared my resolution formerly; yet, least there may be need (hoping there will not), I do enjoin you, as you love me, to command him expressly to wait upon you and stay with you 'til he shall receive my further orders, and all his council and servants that they assist him to obey this, my command, as likewise that he do nothing without the Queen's² advice, knowing that the Queen will encourage his council to debate things, as they used to do, the better to prepare her judgments. For Ireland, I promise to do nothing till I speak with Montereul. In the meantime, all I can say is that when he comes, I shall therein give you full satisfaction.

But I must not forget the King. Assuredly my case will be that I shall not be admitted to London, nor will the Scots (upon any terms) declare for me, but will retire their army and restore their garrisons very speedily. Now, when this shall come to pass (as I am very confident it will within six weeks), how shall I dispose of myself? Here I cannot stay without being a prisoner; and, for going to Scotland, I can only do it as I am ready to die for the Queen, but not otherways. Wherefore, if the Queen shall counsel me to take some other courses, believe me she must very speedily, and quickly go to prepare things to that end.

Trust me, sweetheart, I have very truly stated my case, whereupon I desire to have your opinion as soon as may be, for it will fully satisfy him who is eternally yours. Assure Digby³ that he still stands right in my opinion, and all my other friends that I am and will be ever constant to them.

John Bruce, ed. *Charles I in 1646: Letters of King Charles the First to Queen Henrietta Maria* (London: Camden Society, 1856):51–52. [modernized]

¹ Jean de Montereul (c. 1613–1651), French envoy at the court of Charles I

² Anne of Austria (1601–1666), Queen regent of France for her son, Louis XIV

³ George Digby (1612–1677), Baron Digby, eldest son of the Earl of Bristol